

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 90-115 are presently pending in this application, Claims 2-89 having been canceled, Claims 90-115 having been newly added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the specification was objected to for the title not being descriptive; Claims 4 and 81 have been objected to for informalities; Claims 5-12, 19-34, 41-52 and 64-84 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite; Claims 1-3, 13, 53-56, 62-66, 83 and 85-89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 10-294396 (hereinafter "JP '396"); and Claims 4, 69 and 84 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '396; Claims 14-17, 19-22, 32-34, 57, 59-61, 69-72 and 78-82 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over '396, and further in view of Torigian et al. (U.S. Patent 6,623,283) and Degani et al. (U.S. Patent 6,100,475); Claims 35-40 and 58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over '396 in view of JP 58-030175 (hereinafter "JP '175"); Claims 50-52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '396 and JP '175, and further in view of Torigian et al. and Degani et al.; and Claims 74-77 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '396 and Torigian et al., and further in view of Yamada et al. (U.S. Patent 5,965,064). However, Claims 5-13, 23-34, 41-52, 67 and 68 were indicated as including allowable subject matter.

First, Applicants acknowledges with appreciation the courtesy of interview granted to Applicants' representative on January 9, 2007, and the indication in the Office Action that Claims 5-13, 23-34, 41-52, 67 and 68 include allowable subject matter. Based on our discussions during the interview, Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matters recited in original Claims 1 and 5, and new Claim 103 includes subject matter recited in

original Claims 1 and 5 using a means plus function form. Furthermore, Claim 1 has been amended for clarification, and Claims 90-102 depending from Claim 1 and Claims 104-115 depending from Claim 103 have been newly added herein. These new claims are believed to find clear support in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed, and no new matter is believed to be added thereby.

With regard to the objection to the title of the invention, the title has been amended as suggested in the Office Action.

In light of the discussions in the interview and the prior indication of allowable subject matter, as well as in view of the amendments presented above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding and the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. If, however, the Examiner disagrees with any of the amendments and additions presented above, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language and expedite the prosecution of the present application. Applicants respectfully request an early and favorable action to the effect discussed above.

Respectfully submitted,

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